



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



KEITH CREAGH
DIRECTOR

July 14, 2014

TO: Keith Creagh, Director

INFORMATION: Natural Resources Commission

Transaction: DNR/MDOT Transportation Corridor Acquisition
Elmdale to Lowell Railroad Corridor – Kent and Ionia Counties
Land Transaction Case #20120155

Purchase: 77.31 acres (6.62 linear miles) more or less - \$261,200.00

PA 240 of 2012: PILT Estimate: \$0.00 – ownership to be held by MDOT
This parcel is south of the Mason-Arenac County line and will result in
an increase of 0.00 excluded acres.

Description: Kent County, Bowne Township, T05N, R09W, Section 1, Lowell
Township, T06N, R09W, Sections 36, 25, 24, 13, 12, and 11, and Ionia
County, Campbell Township, T05N, R08W, Section 6, Boston Township,
T06N, R08W, Sections 31, and 19: as more completely described in the
case file.

Seller: Mid-Michigan Railroad Inc., Jacksonville, Florida

Special Conditions: Preservation of 1.62 miles of the Railroad Corridor by provisions of
Federal Law, Section 8(d) of the National Trails Act, 16 U.S.C. 1247 (d).

Authority: Act 451, Public Acts of 1994, as amended
PA 295 of 1976, State Transportation Preservation Act, as amended
Part III, MDOT/DNR Memorandum of Agreement, as amended

Notice: This item will appear on the Department of Natural Resources
(Department) August 5, 2014, calendar, and is eligible for approval on
August 12, 2014.

Purpose: The acquisition of this inactive railroad corridor will provide key trail
connections at the City of Lowell, and the west end of the Fred Meijer
Grand River Valley Rail-Trail. The north-south leg of the corridor, 5.54
miles long, is set to become part of the route for the North Country
National Scenic Trail, and thus part of the proposed hiking route for the
Governor's Showcase Trail from Belle Isle to Ironwood. The 1.08 mile
east-west leg will extend the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail
west to the City of Lowell.

Comments: The North Country National Scenic Trail, the longest of the 11 National Scenic Trails, stretches 4,600 miles across seven states from New York to North Dakota. Michigan, at 1,500 miles, has more trail miles than any other state. The City of Lowell, centrally located along the trail, is home to the headquarters for both the National Park Service (NPS), the agency that administers the trail, and the North Country Trail Association (NCTA), the "friends" organization that unites the efforts of the various local volunteer chapters to assist the NPS to build, maintain, protect and promote the trail.

The subject corridor has distinct north-south and east-west segments. The north-south segment snakes 5.54 miles through the rolling agricultural and rural residential lands located between Elmdale and Lowell. For much of this segment the corridor shares the route intimately with a small creek that flows toward the Grand River. This leg fills a critical gap in the route of the North Country Trail and the proposed hiking route for the Governor's Showcase Trail. The east-west leg will serve primarily as a 1.08 mile extension of the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail, providing a key trail connection to the City of Lowell's doorstep, and creating a 58.14 mile long trail corridor extending from Owosso to Lowell.

The corridor presents the following opportunities:

- Secures 5.54 miles of corridor for the route of the North Country National Scenic Trail, and the proposed hiking route of the Governor's Showcase Trail from Belle Isle to Ironwood.
- Secures 1.08 miles of corridor to extend the Fred Meijer Grand River Valley Rail-Trail to the doorstep of the City of Lowell.

Acquisition of this parcel will contribute to achieving Department and Division goals and strategies by providing additional public recreation opportunities.

Engagement: The Department has engaged the Kent County Parks Department, the Kent County Road Commission, the National Park Service, the Western Michigan Chapter of the North Country Trail Association, the City of Lowell, and the Friends of the Fred Meijer Heartlands Trail in discussions regarding the acquisition and ongoing trail operations and maintenance.

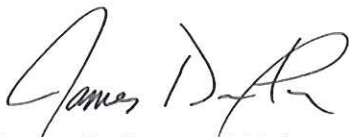
- Recommendation:
- 1) That the acquisition be approved, with payment to be made from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, State Trails Initiative, as contained in Act 16 of 2011, and funds appropriated from the Federal Transportation Enhancement Fund administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation.
 - 2) That the Department includes this MDOT transportation corridor as part of the trail system managed by the Department.
 - 3) That the property be dedicated for public use and administered by the Parks and Recreation Division.
 - 4) That the lands described be acquired by MDOT for designation and use as a Michigan Trailway when legislated requirements are met.



Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
Wildlife Division



William O'Neill, Chief
Forest Resources Division



James L. Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division



Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division



William E. Moritz, Ph.D.
Natural Resources Deputy



Mark H. Hoffman
Chief Administrative Officer

I approve the staff recommendations

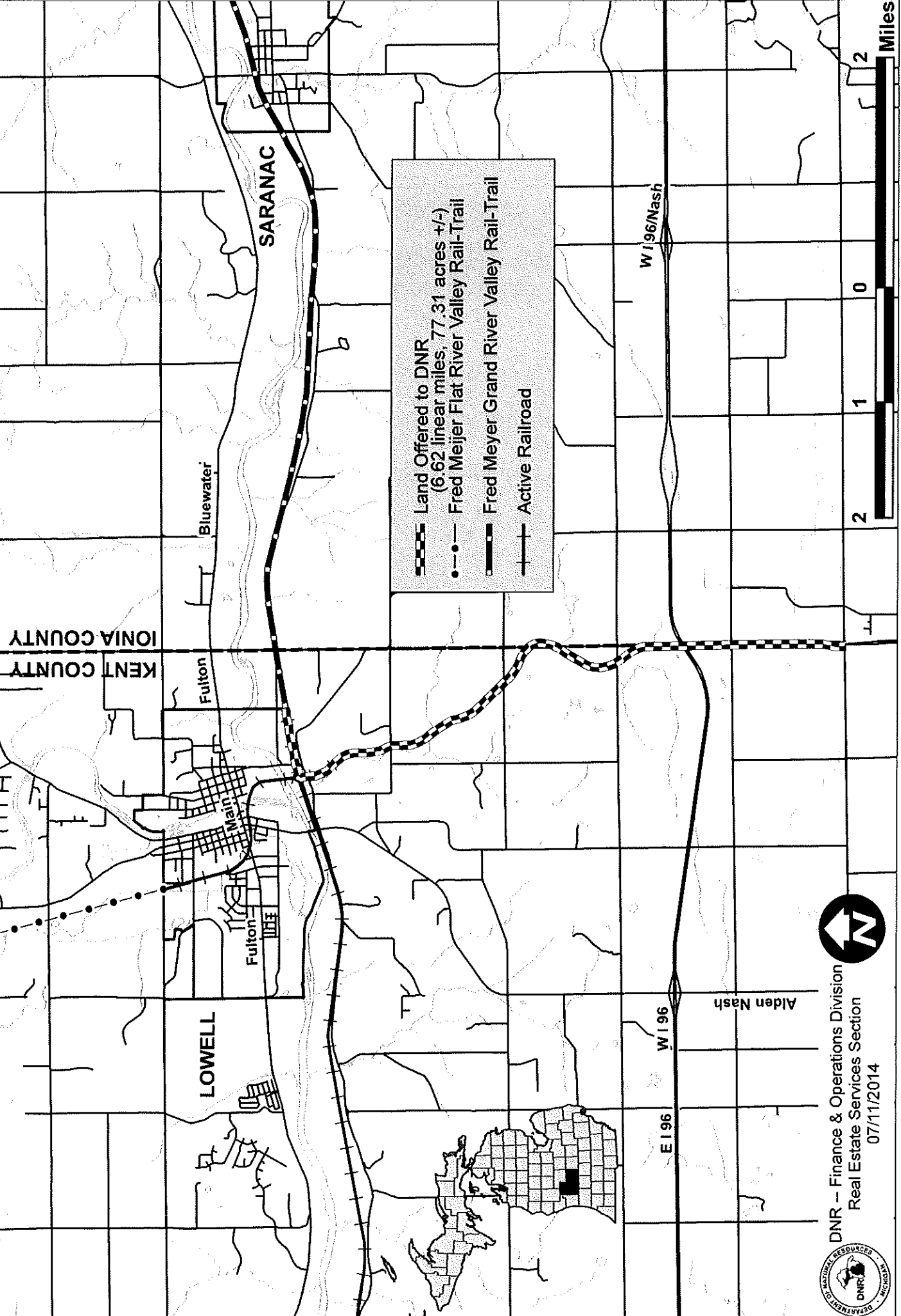
Keith Creagh
Director

Date Approved

DNR/MDOT/TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR ACQUISITION

Elmdale to Lowell-Railroad Corridor -- Kent & Ionia Counties

Land Transaction Case #20120155



DNR – Finance & Operations Division
Real Estate Services Section
07/11/2014

